

your sacrifice. Today, we honor you all.

OFFSHORE DRILLING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As gasoline prices soar to almost \$4 a gallon, the American driving public wants Congress to do something about it, and it is our responsibility.

Where I live, I represent a good part of rural southeast Texas, and many of these individuals are rice farmers, and they work the land, and they can't afford the diesel for their pickup trucks and for their trucks to go and work at the refineries in southeast Texas. All people throughout the country have this same common issue: Why are gasoline prices so high? Why isn't Congress doing something about it?

Well, part of the reason is Congress, instead of exploring our own natural resources, Congress has decided to make the decision to punish energy consumption in this country and to make it more difficult for America to take care of Americans. Congress' policy is let's rely on OPEC; let's rely on that dictator Chavez and get their crude oil while we figure out something else to do on how to take care of ourselves down the road, but the problem is immediate, and we need to deal with it, and we can deal with it.

The first issue: Drilling for crude oil and natural gas. Now, because of Congress, we have made it impossible to drill offshore. This map of the United States shows two areas offshore. This blue area is down by Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. This area in the Gulf of Mexico is where we drill offshore, and we are glad to do that. That crude oil that we take from the Gulf of Mexico and distribute throughout the United States is good for America. But you see, Mr. Speaker, there is also more crude oil in the Gulf of Mexico by Florida. There is also crude oil over off the east coast. Mr. Speaker, there's also crude oil off the sacred coast of California, the west coast, but we don't drill over there. We don't drill in the Gulf of Mexico. We don't drill on the east coast. Why? Because of Congress.

So one thing we could do is lift the offshore drilling prohibitions, not the regulations, but the prohibitions. But because of the environmental fear lobby that is so strong in this Congress, we don't drill where there's crude oil or natural gas. Way up here, not even on the map, is a place called ANWR where there is nothing except crude oil, and we don't drill for crude oil in ANWR because of the environmental fear lobby and because of Congress.

Let's lift those restrictions and take care of ourselves rather than rely on foreign dictators and OPEC to get our crude oil.

Now, there is going to be another offshore drilling rig out in the Gulf of

Mexico over here near this red zone, but it is not going to be built by Americans. Those rigs out there off the coast of Florida, about 48 miles, are going to be built by the Cubans, and it's financed by the Chinese. That's right. The Chinese and the Cubans are drilling where America ought to drill.

Doesn't that bother anybody? Lift the restrictions.

The second thing we need to do is have more refineries. I represent southeast Texas. We have the Nation's largest refinery and the second largest refinery. Down in the Sabine-Neches Waterway that borders Louisiana there are numerous refineries, but they're running at capacity because we haven't built a new refinery in this country in 30 years.

Why? The environmental fear lobby is prohibiting us from taking care of ourselves. So it doesn't do any good to produce more crude oil if we don't have the refinery capacity to produce gasoline and diesel fuel. So make it easier to have refineries in this country. We need to take care of ourselves.

I was somewhat embarrassed as an American citizen when our President, the most powerful person on Earth, had to go and ask OPEC last week to produce more crude oil so we could have gasoline. Of course, they in their arrogant way said, "Well, we'll think about it. Maybe we will and maybe we won't." See, that is what is happening to our country. We are being held hostage because Congress will not let America take care of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, we need to produce the crude oil, the natural gas that we have. We need to even produce and to build more nuclear plants in this country. Right now, China is building nine nuclear plants, and they have 40 on the drawing boards. How many are we making? We're not making any because the environmental fear lobby will not let us build nuclear power plants in this country.

So how long is it going to take Congress to get the message that we need to reduce gasoline prices? One way to do that is to increase supply, and we can take care of ourselves. We are the only major power in the world that depends on other nations for our fuel and for our economy. This ought not to be, but it is just the way it is.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 15 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PASTOR) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord of history and purveyor of all the world, it seems that with the passage of time all nations are coming into a closer unity. People of different cultures and religions are being bound together in common concerns and by greater communication.

By Your grace, individuals seem to be more aware of the world around them and grow in a sense of responsibility. Bless this solidarity and help this Nation through leadership in government, religion and industry build a world of prosperity, freed of hunger and assured of justice and peace.

Ignite a spirit of hopefulness in young people that they may prove themselves to be positive, creative and joyful, truly Your free children both now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CELEBRATING ISRAEL'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. HONDA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, it is with tremendous honor that I rise today to celebrate the 60th anniversary of a great democracy and our close friend and important ally, Israel. With its strong technology sector in both renewable energy development and high-tech research, Israel is a natural friend of Silicon Valley, which I proudly represent.

Israel's contribution to the high-tech industry, from computer processors to cell phones, and its development of life-saving medical techniques, benefit people around the world every day.

I have fond memories of my first trip to Israel, whose people, history, and culture have left an everlasting impression upon me.

I have supported Israel throughout my career, and will continue to do so. We must continue our democratic partnership with Israel. Once again, Mr.